

Chapter 11

Contrastive Pragmatics

1. Tell about an event that happened to you when you were in another country and which confused you. What was it that you didn't understand? How did you feel?

2. The quotation below is by Tannen (1998). Can you support it by giving examples?

We tend to think that the way we do things, think about things is only logical - common sense, human nature. The level of aggression that seems appropriate, and ways of expressing agreement or disagreement, come to seem natural - the obvious way to communicate emotions and intentions. But people growing up in different cultures have very different ideas about what is natural and very different assumptions about human nature.

3. What are speech acts? How many can you name?

4. Write the definitions of the following concepts:

Politeness

Face

Positive face

Negative face

Face threatening acts

5. What strategies can speakers use to realize their speech acts?

6. Discuss how American and Macedonian speakers make requests in terms of shaping the speech acts and the linguistic means that they use.

American requests

a. shaping the speech acts

b. the linguistic means that they use

Macedonian requests

a. shaping the speech acts

b. the linguistic means that they use

7. Write some other features that may cause miscommunication:

Conversational features

Kinetic features

8. Look at the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in Appendix 5. It consists of two tasks. The first task describes a situation in which participants are asked to write a request; the second task describes a situation in which participants are asked to write an apology. In each task there are three sets of sample dialogues: A. samples written by American native speakers; B. samples written by Macedonian students of English; C. samples written in Macedonian by Macedonian native speakers. Do the following tasks:

1. Use the DCTs in Appendix 6 to collect five more dialogues in English for each task from your fellow students and five more dialogues in Macedonian from your friends.
2. Compare the native speakers' requests and apologies with those written by Macedonian students of English;
3. Compare the requests and apologies written by Macedonian students of English with those written in Macedonian by Macedonian native speakers;
4. Write an account of American and Macedonian requests and apologies of at least 500 words.

9. Translate the extract from the script *Scent of a Woman* in Appendix 7. Discuss the linguistic and cultural problems that you faced in the process of translation.